

LAS VEGAS POLICE DEPARTMENT		OPERATIONS
SUBJECT: <i>Prisoner / Patient Transport</i>		NUMBER: OPR.8
EFFECTIVE DATE: <i>9 September 2010</i>		REVIEW DATE:
AMENDS/SUPERSEDES:		APPROVED: <i>Chief of Police Gary Gold</i>
NMMLEPSC STANDARDS: <i>OPR.08.01 – OPR.10.06</i>		NMSA:

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the efficient and effective management of the Prisoner/Patient transport function by providing administrative guidance that identifies the responsibilities and prisoner patient transport processes within the uniform and other components of the department.

II. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Las Vegas Police Department to manage the function of a prisoner patient transport in an effective and efficient manner by coordinating the efforts of uniform and other organizational components as provided in this policy.

III. APPLICABILITY:

This policy is applicable to all commissioned personnel of the Las Vegas Police Department.

IV. REFERENCES:

- A. Las Vegas Police Department
- B. New Mexico Law Enforcement Accreditation Operations 08.01

V. DEFINITIONS:

- A. Prisoner: A person incarcerated in a prison, jail or similar facility.
- B. Patient: is any person who receives medical attention, care, or treatment.
- C. Transport: the movement of people and goods from one location to another.
- D. Interview Room: a room where interrogation or questioning takes place.

VI. PROCEDURE:

In all instances involving the transfer of persons in custody of the Department, there are concerns that should be kept in mind for the safety and rights of prisoners. At the same time the Department must insure that these persons do not escape and that they are not permitted to injure citizens or police personnel. This order establishes guidelines for all officers in the safe transportation of prisoners.

A. VEHICLES

1. All patrol vehicles, unless otherwise designated, are equipped for transporting prisoners.
2. Units with cages are to be used for transports in order to insure the safety of the community, prisoners and officers.
3. Vehicles used for transporting prisoners are equipped and modified to minimize possibilities of prisoner exit from the rear compartment.
4. Vehicles used for transporting are equipped and modified in the following manner (at a minimum):
 - a. Protective screen;
 - b. Rear door release is operated from either the front compartment or from the outside of the vehicle; and
 - c. Rear compartment window movement has been made inoperable.

B. PHYSICAL SEARCH OF PRISONERS/VEHICLES

1. When making an arrest, an officer shall conduct a thorough, systematic search of the prisoner. This search is intended to uncover any weapons, contraband or other articles on the prisoner that could cause injury to the officer or facilitate an escape. The officer shall take possession of all weapons and evidence prior to placing the prisoner in the police vehicle. If practical, this search should be conducted by an officer of the same sex.
2. In the event the prisoner is turned over to another officer for transportation or is being transported from a holding facility to court, etc., the prisoner shall be searched by the transporting officer before being placed into a unit.
3. Each time a prisoner is to be transported, the transporting vehicle should be examined to ensure that no contraband or similar items are present. Because police vehicles are not ordinarily under constant observation, a search is made to assure that no contraband, weapon or other harmful item has been placed or left in the vehicle. This is

to include a thorough examination of the rear seat compartment.

C. TRANSPORT OPERATIONS

1. Prisoners transported in a police vehicle equipped with a protective screen will be placed in the rear seat.
2. No more than three (3) prisoners will be transported in the same vehicle at one time unless there is no other choice. However, if possible, they should be separated if from the same incident for safety and/or investigative reasons. This should be discouraged.
3. Use of restraints to secure prisoner is limited to the following department approved restraining devices:
 - a. Double locking handcuffs
 - b. Belly chain
 - c. Leg restraints
 - d. Double locking leg shackles
 - e. Hobble Strap (only by officers trained in there utilization).
4. All prisoners or persons in protective custody will be handcuffed behind their backs, if possible, and remain so restrained while being transported to a detention facility. Restraining a prisoner through a procedure commonly known as 'hog-tying' shall not be utilized.
5. Exceptions may be made for the elderly, pregnant, invalids, ill or injured individuals, or other persons with physical handicaps which require the use of either modified procedures or no handcuffs.
6. If a prisoner is transported from the detention facility to another location, the officer will employ the use of restraints.
7. If the prisoner poses a flight risk or increased danger to the officer, the additional use of a belly chain, leg restraint or leg shackles may be utilized.
8. Prisoners will not be allowed to contact an attorney, family members, or friends while they are being transported to the detention facility. The prisoner will be advised that unless otherwise prohibited, they will be allowed to communicate with their attorney and/or family member once they have been booked into the detention facility.
9. If the prisoner is being transported to court, medical facility, etc., extra care should be taken in this regard to limit access to telephone, etc. Unless otherwise authorized by a supervisor, the prisoner will not be allowed to have contact with family members while there. If their attorney wishes to speak to them at court, they will be allowed.
10. While the transporting officer has custody of the prisoner, the officer will keep the prisoner under observation at all times.

D. RESPONSE TO EMERGENCIES DURING TRANSFERS

A. Officers involved in transporting prisoners do not ordinarily respond to calls for law enforcement service. Exceptions to this policy may include:

1. Life threatening circumstances;
2. Serious injury to any person is likely; or
3. Request for emergency assistance from another officer.

Note: Supervisor approval should be sought when feasible.

B. All other situations encountered by the transporting officer requiring police response shall be reported via police radio.

E. ESCAPE OF PRISONER IN TRANSPORT

A. Should a prisoner escape during transport, the transporting officer shall:

1. Immediately notify dispatch of the escape and request assistance in the search and apprehension of the escapee.
2. Notify the appropriate law enforcement agencies for assistance if the escape takes place outside the city limits of Las Vegas, the officer shall cooperate with local authorities in completing any necessary reports.
3. Notify an immediate supervisor as soon as practical.

B. The transporting officer shall submit a complete report on the escape as soon as practical. If the escape occurred outside our jurisdiction a memo will be submitted detailing the incident through the chain-of-command.

C. If the prisoner is recaptured within a reasonable time period, the prisoner may additionally be charged with any applicable crimes. If the prisoner is recaptured outside a reasonable time period, they are still considered under arrest on the original charge. Any additional charges may be sought through the issuance of a warrant.

D. If the prisoner is not recaptured, the officer shall prepare the necessary paperwork to obtain a warrant.

F. SPECIAL TRANSPORT SITUATIONS

A. Transporting prisoners of opposite sex:

When it is necessary for an officer to transport a prisoner of the opposite sex, the officer will notify the dispatcher of the location, beginning mileage, and destination. Upon arrival at the destination, the officer will notify the dispatcher of the ending mileage and location.

B. Transporting prisoners with handicaps

1. Due care should be taken when transporting handicapped individuals. Careful evaluation and discretion must be utilized by officers in determining when exceptions to restraints should apply. The nature of an individual's illness, injury, or physical handicap must be weighed against the threat the individual poses to the officer or citizens. Partial restraint is preferable to no restraint at all.
2. Consideration should be given to see that necessary handicap aids (i.e., crutches, wheelchairs, etc.) as well as prescription medicines are transported and made available to the prisoner at the appropriate time. These items must be turned over to the detention facility staff.
3. The officer should use discretion when using restraining devices on handicapped prisoners; however, it should not be automatically assumed that a handicapped prisoner poses no flight risk or danger to the officer.

C. Transporting sick/injured prisoners

1. If a subject has been injured prior to being arrested (i.e., bar fight, etc.) or while the arrest is being effected and has any visibly obvious injuries which require medical attention (more than first aid), they will not be accepted into the San Miguel County Detention Facility and should first be transported to a medical facility for treatment. This transportation will be done in an ambulance with appropriate police presence.
 - a. If the prisoner refuses medical treatment, he will not be transported, at the discretion of EMS personnel and the details will be documented in the associated reports of the incident.
2. If a prisoner needs to be transported to a medical facility for a non-emergency complaint, the prisoner will be transported in a police unit.
3. If a prisoner needs to be transported to a medical facility for an emergency complaint or is not mobile, an ambulance will respond.
4. Officers should restrain sick or injured prisoners in the approved method, being cognizant that they may still pose a flight risk or danger to the officer.

5. If a prisoner is transported to a medical facility, he should be restrained as much as possible. The use of handcuffs is recommended to discourage and inhibit movement. The prisoner should remain under constant supervision of the officer.
6. If the prisoner needs to be admitted to the medical facility, the officer will immediately contact a supervisor to make arrangements either for a release, a hold or additional security measures.

D. Transporting Mentally Disturbed Individual

1. Officers may be called to transport a mental patient who presents a likelihood of causing serious harm to themselves or others to either the San Miguel County Detention Facility or a hospital for evaluation and/or admission. Before transporting, officers should confirm that the necessary arrangements have been made for admission to a facility when possible.
2. Prisoners known or suspected of being mentally disturbed should be restrained securely through the use of approved restraints.
3. The transporting officer shall be notified prior to leaving the detention facility if the prisoner poses either an escape risk has a suicide potential or illness.

G. SECURITY UPON ARRIVAL AT DESTINATION

1. Upon arrival at the San Miguel County Detention Facility the officer will secure their firearms in the authorized lock boxes or within the trunk of their vehicle. The key to the lock box or the trunk of the vehicle will be placed in a location to prevent access by the prisoner. The prisoner will then be removed from the vehicle and released to the custody of the correction officers.
2. If the subject is unruly and violent, he/she will be taken directly to a cell and the use of any restraints at that time will comply with regulations set forth by the Detention Facility.
3. If the prisoner is being transported to the San Miguel County Detention Facility or another detention facility, the same procedures should be followed if no designated lock boxes are available, the officers will secure their weapon(s) in the trunk of their unit.
4. In the event a prisoner presents a security hazard to the court, the respective judge shall be notified prior to arraignment so that other arrangements or additional restraints may be utilized.

H. DOCUMENTATION

1. Any prisoner being transported from a detention facility must be positively identified as the person who is to be moved. This should be done by checking booking records assigned to the prisoner. The prisoner should not be transported, except in case of emergency, until positive identification is confirmed.
2. If a prisoner is being transported to a local court, the paperwork should have already been transferred. If the prisoner is being transported to a court in another jurisdiction, copies of the arrest record, complaint, and related reports must accompany them.
3. If the prisoner is being transported to another facility, copies of their arrest record, court papers and personal property should accompany them.
4. Transfer documentation must include information that specifically alerts receiving officers to potential security problems. This information may include the prisoner's suicide or escape potential and unusual illnesses.
5. When a prisoner is transported to another detention facility, upon arrival the transporting officer will ensure that the receiving officer acknowledges the transfer by signing in the appropriate place on the Inmate Release Form. This form will then be returned to Records where it will be placed in the file with the arrest report.

I. ARRESTEES OR PRISONERS UTILIZING INTERVIEW ROOM

1. No officer will allow an arrestee or prisoner to be left unattended in any room other location while at the Las Vegas Police Department.
2. Personnel in close proximity of the room available to intervene on behalf of the arrestee/prisoner or the officer.
3. All arrestees or prisoners will be re-searched prior to the interview process.
4. The interview room shall be searched prior to the arrestee or prisoner being brought in.
5. Officers will use their training and experience to decide whether or not to be armed during the interview.
6. All interviews will be conducted in an office which can be locked, i.e. any office, or Detective's offices.
7. All Sergeants will train officers assigned to their shift in dealing with arrestees and prisoners while utilizing the interview room.

J. ARRESTEES OR PRISONERS

1. The policy of the Las Vegas Police Department that arrestees or prisoners will be taken to the Las Vegas Police Department or the San Miguel County Detention Center for processing.
2. When juveniles that are arrested by the Las Vegas Police Department, the officers will notify the juvenile probation office to determine if detention is required. If detention is required and authorized by the JPPO, the JPPO will advise the officers as to which detention center the juvenile will be detained at. AT NO TIME WILL A JUVENILE BE PLACED IN THE SAN MIGUEL COUNTY DETENTION CENTER UNLESS OTHERWISE AUTHORIZED BY A COMMANDER.
3. All required paperwork will be completed before the juvenile is transported to detention facility.
4. All officers will adhere to the transporting and handling of arrested juveniles according to policy.

VII. ATTACHMENTS:

None